

There foloweth a compendyouſ ſtoꝝ / and it is cal-
led the exemple of vertu / in the whiche ye ſhall
ſynde many goodly ſtoꝝ & naturall
dyſputacyons bytvene foure
ladyes named Hardy-
nes / Sapy-
ence /
fortune / and
Nature. Compyled
by Stephyn Hawys one of ſ
gromes of the moſt honorable chambꝛe
of oure ſoueraigne lord kyng Henry the .viij.
And pꝛynted .xx. day of Apryll . Anno dñi .m. cccc. xxx.



Cabbula libri.

Cfyrst a prologue.

How youthe mette With dyscrecyon in a medowe
in his dreame & was reformed by her prouerbes. Ca. i.

How youthe With dyscrecyon sapled ouer y daungerous
passage of vayne glory & arpyed in a fayre plade
belongynge to the foure ladyes named Hardynges / Sa
pyence Fortune and nature. Ca. ii.

Of the merueylous palays of fortune.. Ca. iij.

Of the tryumphauit estate of hardynes Ca. iiii.

Of the glorified towe of sapience. Ca. v.

Of the stronge operacyons of nature. C. vi.

How these foure ladyes pleded at the barre befoze
iustyce whiche of them was most profytable vnto mā
kynde / & of the iudgment of Justyce. Ca. viij.

How after the iudgment of Justyce / Sapience cō
maunded dyscrecyon to lede youthe to mary With clē
nes the kyng of loues daughter. Ca. viij.

How youthe by the way mette With lechery rydyng
on a gote & pryde maned With couetyse on a olyphans
tes backe in a fayre castell and how by the ayde of dys
crecyon he dyd Withstande her temptacyon / and how
he mette With sapience in y mase of worldly busynes
Capitulo. ix.

How Sapience & dyscrecyon ledde youthe ouer the
narrowe bydge of vanyte of the worlde to the palays
of y kyng of loue & of his merueylous apparel. Ca. x.

How sapience presented youth to the kyng of loue
for to mary clennes his daughter & how he befoze the
marriage dyd fyght and dysconforted y dragon With
thre hedis. Ca. xi.

How after the dysconforture of the sayd dragon / he
will growen in age / was receyued With a fayre com

pany of ladyes and was named vertu & with all soye
brought to the palays of the kynge of loue. Ca. xij.

Of the maryage of vertu & clenness & of þe celestyall
feste how after þe maryage an angell shewed vnto the
hell & of the dyuyssions of hell. Ca. xiiij.

How vertu claimed the enherytaunce longynge to
Clenness his wyfe / & how many angels and sayntes
brought them to heuen / and how heuen is enteyled to
Vertu and to clenness / and to all them that loue them
and folowe and procede in theyr steppes. Ca. xiiij.

This boke called the exemple of vertu / was made
and compyled by Stephyn halloys one of the gromes
of the moost honorable chambze of oure souerayne lord
de kynge Henry the. vij. the. xix. yere of his most noble
reygne & by hym presented to our sayd souerayne lord
chappred and marked after this table here before set.

The prologe.



Whan I aduerte in my remembraunce
The famous draughtes of poetes eloquent
Whiche theyr myndes dyd well enhaunce
Bokes to contryeue that were expedient

To be remembred without impediment

For the profyte of humanyte

This was the custume of antyquyte

I now symple and most rude

And naked in depured eloquence

For dulnes rethoryke dothe exclude

Wherfore in makynge I lacke intellygence

Also consyderynge my great neglygence

It fereth me sore for to endyte

But at auenture I wyll now wyte

Vertu.

3. ii.

As very blynde in the poetes arte
 For I therof can nothyng skyll
 Wherfore I laye it all aparte
 But somwhat accordynge to my wyll
 I wyll now we wyte for to fulfyll
 Saynt Poules wordes and tru sentment
 All that is wyrtten is to our document

O prudent Gower in langage pure
 Without corrupcyon most facundyoug
 O noble Chaucer euer most sure
 Of fruytfull sentence ryght delycyous
 O vertuuous Lydgate moche sentencyous
 Unto you all I do me excuse
 Thoughe I can not your connyng blesse

Ca.i.





A Septemer in fallynge of the lefe
Whan Phebus made his inclpnacyon
And all the whete gadzed was in the shefe
By radyaunt hete and operacyon
Whan the byrgyn had full dominacyon
And Dyane entred was one degre
Into the spgne of Gemyne

Whan the golden sterres clere were splendent
In the firmament purfied pure as crystall
By imperyll course without encombrement
As Iuppiter and Mars that be celestrall
With Saturne and Mercury that were supernall
Myrte with Venus that was not retrograte
That caused me to be well fortunate

In a slombryng slepe with slouth opprest
As I in my naked bedde was layde
Thynkynge all nyght to take my rest
Morpheus to me than made a brayde
And in my dreame me thought he sayd
Come walke with me in a medowe amorous
Depeynted with floures that be delycous

I walked with hym into a place
Where that grewe many a fayre floure
With ioye replete and full of solace
And the trees dystyllynge redolent lycoure
More swete fer than the Apryll shoure
And tary I dyde there by longe space
Tyll that I sawe befoze my face

A ryght fayre lady of mydle stature
And also endued with great vertue
Her apparrell was sette with perles pure
Whole beaute alwaye dyd renue
To me she sayd and ye wyll excheue

Vertu.

All wyldnes I wyll be your guyde
That yet fraylte shall not styde

Unto her I answered o lady glozvous
I praye you tell me what is your name
For ye seme to be ryght pryncous
And I am yonge and soze to blame
Of byces full and vertue lame
But I wyll be ruled now by your pleasure
So that your oꝛde be made in mesure

Eclipped I am she sayd dyscrecyon
And yf ye wyll be ruled by me
Ye shall haue ioye without repꝛehencon
And neuer fall into fragplyte
Yowthe lackynge me it is great pyte
For in what place I am exyled
They be with synne ryght ofte desyled

It longeth euer vnto my propyete
Yowthe to gyue courage for to lerne
I wyll not medle with no duplycyte
But sayedfulnes I wyll dyscerne
And bynge thy soule to blyss eterne
By wyse exmple and moꝛall doctryne
For of a royall vertu I am the heed and syne

Forlake also all euyl company
And be founde true in woꝛde and dede
Remembre that this woꝛlde is transytoꝝ
As thou deseruest so shall thou haue inede
Loue god alway and also do hym oꝛde
And for no mannes pleasure be thynne owne so
Gyue them fayre woꝛdes and let them go

Be to thy kynge euer true subiecte
As thou shuldest be by ryght and reason
Let thy herte lowely in hym be sette

Without ony spotte or euyl treason
And be obedyent at euery season
Unto his grace without rebellyon
That thou with truthe may be compányon

Loue neuer vnloued for that is payne
Whyle that thou lyest of that be ware
Loue as thou seest the loued agayne
Orels it wyll turne the to care
Be neuer taken in that fast snare
Prove or thou loue that is most sure
And than in doubte thou shalte not endure

Be ware by leue no flaterynge tonge
For flaterers be most deceyuable
Thoughe that they company with the longe
Yet at the ende they be varyable
For they by reason are not fauorable
But euer false flaterynge and double
And with thep tonges cause ofte great trouble

This bytelle worlde aye full of bytternes
Alwayne turnynge lyke to a ball
No man in it can haue no sykernes
For whan he clymbeth he hath a fall
O wauerynge shadowe bytter as gall
O fatall welthe soone at an ende
Thoughe thou ryght hys do ofte ascende

Whan she to me had made relacyon
Of all these prouerbes by good conclusyon
She gaue to me an informacyon
For to depyue all yll abusyon
And to consydre the great derysyon
Whiche is in youthe that may not se
No thyng appropried to his prosperyte
For the than we wente to an haueu syde

Where was a shyppe lyenge at rode
Caryenge after the Wynde and tyde
And with moche spyces ryght well lode
Upon it lokynge we longe abode
Till Colus with blastes began to roze
Than a bozde we went with peyne ryght soze

This water eclyped was baynegloze
Full of ieopardy and tempestuous
And the shyp called was ryght truly
The bestell of the passage daungerous
The waues were hye and greatly troublous
The captayne called was good conforzte
And the sternesman goodly pasporte.

Capitulum. ij.

Inge were we dzyuen w Wynde & Wether
Till we arryued in a fayre ylande
Where there was a bote with a teder
Of merueplous wode as I bnderstande
Precyous stones lay vpon the sande
And poynted Dymondes grewe on the rockes
And Corall also by ryght hyghe stockes

Amased I was for to beholde
The precyous stones vnder my fete
And the erthe glysterynge of golde
With floures fayre of odour swete
Dame dyscrecyon I dyd than grete
Prayenge her to me to make relacyon
Who of this ylande hath the domynacyon

She sayd foure ladyes in vertu excellent
Of whiche the eldest is dame nature
That dayly fourmeth after her intent
Euery beest and lyuynge creature
Bothe foule and fayre and also pure
All that be dependynge in her ordynauce

Where that he fauoureth there is great pleasure

The secunde is called dame fortune
Agaynst Whome can be no resistance
For she dothe sette the strynges in tune
Of every persone by her magnyfyence
Whan they so done best by good experyence
She wyll them lose and let them synne
Causynge them fall by her turnynge tryppes

The thyrde called is dame hardynes
That ofte ruleth by her chualtry
She is ryght stoute and of great prowes
And captayne of a lusty company
And ruleth them euer full hardly
And to gette honoure and worldly treasure
She putteth her ofte in a venture

The fourth is wysdome a lady bryght
Whiche is my syster as ye shall se
Whome I do loue with all my myght
For she enclyneth euer to benygnyte
And medelch not with fraude nor subtylte
But maketh many noble clerkes
And ruleth them in all theyr werkes

They dwell all in a fayre castell
Besyde a ryuer moche depe and clere
And be experte in fets manuell
That vnto them can be no pere
Of erthly person that lyueth here
For they be so fayre and wonderous
That them to se it is solacyous

Longe haue they trauesed greatly in the lawe
Whiche of them shulde haue the premyence
And none of them theyr case wyll withdraue
Tyll of dame Justyce they knowe the sentence

They argue often and make defence
 yche vnto other without remedy
 I wpll no lenger haue of them memory.

Capitulum tertium.



Come on sayre youthe and go with me
 vnto that place that is delectable
 Buylde with toures of curyosyte
 And yet though ye be lamentable
 Whan y^e arte there you wpll be cōfortable
 To se the meruepics that there be wrought
 No man can prynte it in his thought

Wherin we wente tyll at the last
A castell I sawe wherof I mused
Not fully frome by a stones cast
To se the toures I was agast
Set in a valey so strongly fortifyed
And compassed goodly and well edifyed

The toures were hyghe of adamant stones
With fanes wauerynge in the wynde
A fygght fyne golde made for the nones
And roo buckes ranne vnder the lynde
And hunters came them ferre behynde
A ioye it was / such sawe I neuer
Abyde quod she ye shall se a better

Forthe she me ledde to the castell warde
Where we were lette in by humptye
And so after she ledde me for warde
Tyll that I sawe a royall tre
With buddes bloomed of great braute
And whan we wente into the hall
That glased was truly with crystall

And hanged was with clothes of aras
Made of fyne golde with a noble stoz
How that there somtyme reynyng was
In the regyon of hyghe Italy
A balpant emperoure and a myghty
That had to name for sothe Cyberius
Whiche dyd inquire of prudent Josephus

Why he his offycers so longe kepte
Unto hym he answered a good cause why
Somtyme I sawe a man that slepte
That wounded was full piteously
And on his woundes suckyng many a fly
I than for pite meued them awaye

By whiche he awoke and to me dyd saye

Where thou supposed to me comforte

Thou now hast done me double greuaunce

Puttyng away the flies that dyd resorte

To me beyuge full of bloody sustynance

By this thou mayst haue good perseuerance

That nowe wyll come the flies most hungry

That wyll me byte .x. tymes moze greuouly

The rose was wrought by merueylous geometry

Coloured with asure golde and gobles

With knottes keruen full ryght craftely

And sette also with wantayne sowles

As popyniayes / pyes / iayes / and owles

And as I loked on my ryght syde

A lady I sawe of merueylous pryde

Syttynge in a chaire at the vpper ende

Of all the hall as a lady and prynces

Amonge many kynges that dyd entende

To be obedyent to her hyghe noblenes

Her apparayle was made of moche fayre ryches

Sette with rubyes most pure and rubycunde

Embroidzen with perles and many a dyamounde

Besydes her sate the worthyes nyne

And she amonge them a whele turnynge

Full lowe to her they dyd than enclyne

She somtyme laughynge and somtyme lourynge

Her condycyon was to be dyssemblynge

And many she exalted vpon her whele

Gyuyng them great falles that they dyd fele

Than sayd dyscrecyon beholde and se

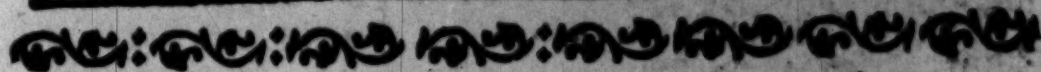
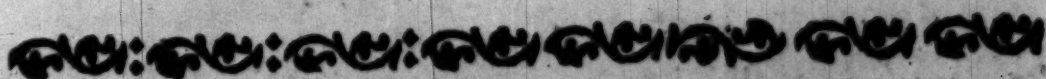
That in dame fortune is no stablenes

This worlde also is but a vanyte

A dreame a pompe nothyng in stedfastnes

For fortune is false and full of doublenes
 When she most flattereth she is not sure
 As thou mayst se dayly in bye
 Capitulum.

liij.



As we went forth to the tabernacle
 Of dame hardynes most pure and fayre
 Aboue all places a ryght fayre spectacle
 Stroked w flouris þ gaue goodly apert
 Of vertuons turkeys there was a chaper
 Wherin she late in her cote armure
 Berynge a shelde the felde of a sure

Wherin was sette a rampyngelson
Of fyne golde ryght large and greate
A swerde she had of merueylous facyon
As though a thousande she shulde bete
Roman the vyctory of her myght gete
A noble byrgyn there dyd her serue
That fyrst made harnesys called mynerue

The chambze where she helde her consistory
The dewe aromatike dyde ofte degoute
Of fragrant floures full of delycasy
That all yll ayers dyde encence out
A carbuncle there was that all aboute
Enlumyned the chambze bothe daye & nyght
We thought it was an heuenly syght

Byne quenes I sawe that sate her by
Beynge all armed of great fortitude
In many a stoure they wanne the vyctory
And were endued with facunde pulcriteude
For to haunte armes was theyr consuetude
Many a regyon they often wanne
And also baynquysshed many a noble man

Nexte vnto her sate the hyghe queene Asia
That was a conqueresse so puppsaunt
And besyde her the queene of Saba
Whiche in great ryches was tryumphsaunt
And also I polpte in armes balysaunt
Sate with her besyde queene Hecsuba
And yet also the queene Europa

Present there was the whiche queene Iuno
And queene Dancasyll with fayre queene Elyne
And yet I sawe than by her also
The noble byrgyn yonge Polerpyne
That was destroyed at the last ruyne

Of Troye the great by noble pyrus
The sone of Achylles that was so chynalrous

As I dyd loke I had commaundment
Of dame dyscrecyon for to remembre
These noble ladyes so pure and excellent
Hardy of courage of age ryght tender
yet not withstandynge de the dyde surrendre
And all theyr strengthe and lusty corage
For he spareth neyther youthe ne age.

Capitulum.

b.



Uertu.

B.ii.

Than as I walked to the dwelling place
Of dame sapience so full of blys
Replete with ioye/vertu/and grace
Nothyng there lacked that possyble is

Man for to conforste withouten mys
Though he were derke in deedly foly
He shulde there be enlumyned shortly

Her towe was made of werkes curyous
I can nothyng extende the goodlynes
Of her palays so good and glozyus
Bylded in the place both of fastnes
Withouten tast of worldly bytternes
No person can extolle the souerente
Of her worthy and royall dygnyte

She eche estate shulde haue in gouernaunce
As them to rule or that they repent
For better it is to haue good puruayaunce
At the begynnynge as is expedient
Than for to wysse for thynges mysspent
That myght be saued longe afore
And with afore wytt kepe in store

Her chambre was glased with byrall claryfied
Depeynted with coulours of delectacyon
A place of pleasure so heuenly glozysed
In vertu/helth/lyfe/and saluacyon
Without ony stormy trybulacyon
That myght anoye the heuenly helth
But alwaye conforste to the soules welth

There sate dame prudence in vertu magnysied
Inpossyble it is to shewe her goodlyhed
She was to fayre and clerely purysed
And so dyscrete and full of womanhed
That as I trove and vertu were deed

Yet it shulde reupue in her agayne
She was so gentyll and without dysdeyne

It was conforte vnto my herte
For to beholde that heuenly syght
Dyscrecyon sayd I shulde not departe
Tyll I had spoken with her syster bryght
Forthe she me ledde with all her myght
Vnto that prynces and royall souerayne
Ergo my labour was not in vayne

Then spake dame prudence to meke cositenaunce
Welcome dyscrecyon my syster dere
Where haue ye be by longe contynuaunce
With youthe she sayd that ye se here
And for my sake I you requyre
Hym to receyue into your seruyce
And he shall serue you in goodly wyse

Welcome she sayd for my systers sake
And yet also for your owne
Into my seruyce I wyll you take
Syth that your wyldenes is ouer blowen
The seide of vertue on you shalbe sowen
Vpce to depyue by his good auctoryte
As for to subdue all yll iniquyte

Of other mennes wordes be thou not holde
And of theyr promysse make thou no behest
And yf thou here an yll tale tolde
Gyue no iudgment but say the best
So shall thou lyue euermore in rest
Who lytell medleth is best at ease
For well were he that all myght please

Beware kepe them frome great offence
That thou condemned be not by ryght wysenes
Whan she dothe gyue her mortall sentence

Without peas or mercy cause her to relese
Her iudgment of mortall heuynesse
That the best frende to the Wyll be
The so; to socoure in great necessyte

But yet in them haue none assyaunce
As fyrste to synne thynkyng that they
At the ende to the Wyll be delpueraunce
Naye ryght wyscensse Wyll dyue them alwaye
For of all synnes without delaye
Suche synne in hope it is the most
For it is the synne in the holy ghost

Now I ampte you into youe rowme
In the whiche you shall your selfe apply
Of myne owne chambze you shalbe grome
Loke you be dyligent and do not vary
Fro my commaundemes neuer speccally
For and you Wyll them well obserue
A moche better rowme you may deserue

The fyrst commaundement that I gyue the
Thynke on the ende or thou begynne
For thou by ryght may knowe the certaynte
That dethe is the fyne of euery synne
Be thou not taken in the deuylls gynne
But repentaunce may loose the soone
Of that great synne that thou hast done

Trust not to moche in foytunes grace
Thoughe she laughe on the a whyle
For she can sodenly turne her face
Whan that she lyt the to begyle
She welthe and ioye can soone defyle
And plunge the in the pytte of pouerte
Wherfore in her haue thou no surete

Presume no ferther than the behoueth

For it wyl turne the to great shame
For who that frome his roome remoueth
He is often full greatly to blame
And medeleth with other and in them lame
As nothyng cunnyng nor experte
They may hym call sy malaperte

O that thou speke call to thy remembraunce
Unto what mater thy worde shall spgnyfy
Loke that it turne no man to greuaunce
Thoughe that it be spoken merely
Yet many there be wyl take it greuouly
Whiche myght cause wrathe and debate
Whyle that thou lquest be warre of that

For a thyng lost without recouer
Loke that thou neuer be to penyue
Thanke good of it and thynke to haue another
Let wysdome than be to the confortatue
That to thy brayne is best preseruatue
For euer more ryght wyle is he
That can be patient in aduersyte

Prove thy frende in a mater fayned
O thou haue nede than shalte thou se
Whether he be iustly with the retyned
The for to soroure in thy necessyte
By profe thou mayst knowe the beryte
For profe afoze that nede dothe requyre
Defeteth doubte that euer ne in fere

Be thou neuer so blynde in wyl
Yet loke thou be reformed by reason
Than shalte thou my mynde fulfyll
And thou thyselfe therto abandon
Streyue not with reason for none sucheson
For where he lacketh there is great outrage

And without her may not aswage

Esche we also the synne of pryde
The mother and the brenent rote
Of all the synnes at euery tyde
Wherfore trede thou her vnder fote
With helpe of vertu so swete and sote
Whiche is best salue to helpe thy soze
And to thy helthe the to restore

Wo worthe synne without repentaunce
Wo worthe bondage without relese
Wo worthe man without gouernaunce
Wo worthe infynall payne and dystresse
Wo worthe byce put ferre in pcese
Wo worthe soueraynte haupnge dysdayne
And wo worthe pyte that dothe refrayne

Wo worthe rpyght that may not be herde
Wo worthe frendshyp without stablyte
Wo worthe tru sentence that is deserde
Wo worthe the man full of duplycyte
Wo worthe the person without benygnyte
Wo worthe lyberte withouten pease
And wo worthe cruelte that may not cease

Wo worthe cunnyng that is abused
Wo worthe promyse withouten payment
Wo worthe promyse withouten payment
Wo worthe vertu that is refused
Wo worthe trouble without extynguyshment
Wo worthe soly on message sent
Wo worthe reason that is exyled
And wo worthe truthe that is desyled

Wo worthe the trust without assuraunce
Wo worthe grace not set ny
Wo worthe iustyce kepte in dystaunce

Woe worthe welthe replete with enuy
Woe worthe the batayle without bycroyp
Woe worthe benygnyte without good ende
And woe worthe wronge that dothe defende

These commaundementes I put in memozy
Them for to kepe doyng my dyligence
With dame sapyence I dyd longe tary
Whiche dyd me teche with perfyte influence
Of her delicate and dulcet complacence
Than spake dyscrecyon anon to me
In the presens of her systers maieste

Thou arte beholden to my syster reuerent
That hath reteyned the vnto her seruaunt
Wherfore be thou to her obedyent
And at euery houre to her attendaunt
And ryotous company do thou not haunt
That wyll depyue and hurte thy name
Wherfore of vertuous myghte let be thy game

Capitulum.

vi.

Dyscrecyon ferther forth me dyd lede
Unto the solempne and royall mansyon
Of dame nature in the humayne stede
Ryght pleasaunt was her habytacyon
Of merueylous werke and lycuacyon
And she her selfe helde her estate
In a glouryous chambze without stryfe or bate
Her toure was gylded full of the sonne beames
And within hanged with clothe of aras
The rose was peynted with golden streames
And lyke crystall depured was
Euery wyndowe aboute of glas
Where that she sate as a sayre goddess
All thynges creatyng by her busynesse

Meru.

.C.i.



Full wonderous was her operacyon
In euery kynde and in euery degre
With outen rest or excecacyon
I wyll not medle with her faculte
For it longeth not vnto me
But som what after I wyll expresse

Of her great power and worthynesse
But in my booke well for to procede
Dame dyscrecyon ferther me brought
Into a sayre chambze as ye may rede
Of syne geometry ryght well wrought
To conforte man there lacked nought
But as me thought there was no company
Save onely dame dyscrecyon and I

We had ben but a lytell whyle there
But that we sawe a lady clere
Ryght well appareyled in sadde gere
Myde in her behauour and dyscrete of chere
That came vs by and very nere
Ascendynge vp into her hyghe sete
Garnysshed with perles and with golde bete

Then sayd dyscrecyon this is dame dame Justice
Clene of conscience without corrupcyon
And neuer spotted with the synne of couetyse
But tru as stele in the intencion
Of ryght euer more without destruccyon
Gyuyng alwaye a ryghtfull iudgment
Obeie thou yowthe this lady reuerent

A iudge fulfilled with the synne of auaryce
Or with fauour of kynne made blynde
Must nedes do wronge by great preiudyce
For fauour shulde not conscience bynde
Ryght to dyssemble as I now fynde
In problemes wyten as of antyquyte
Made by phylosophers of auctoryte

As we stode talkynge thus togyder
Up came dame fortune so goodly glozfyed
Impossible it is for me to dyscouer

Vertu.

C. 11.

How goygous she was and greatly magnyfyed
Full lyke a goddes that had ben deifyde
Clothed with golde set full of rubyes
And t wyrt with emeraudes and many turkeys

And nexte to her there dyd ensue
Dame hardynes that noble lady
After whome anone dyd pursue
Dame sapyence whiche dyd not tary
Than came dame nature appareyled royally
And all the other were cladde in golde
Sette with dyamundes many a folde

They loked all vnto the grounde
Afore dame iustyce for obeysaunce
That sate there bothe hole and sounde
Withouten any dyscontynuaunce
Gyuyng good ere vnto the bitteraunce
Of the foure ladyes pledyng at the barre
And in theyr causes there was moche garre.

Capitulum.

bis.



And fyrst dame hardynesse began to plede
Sapence she was to man most profitable
Many be the hertes that ofte she dyd fede
Of conquerours as it was conuenable
And by my courage haue made them able
Regyons to wyne theyr enemyes to subdue
Now make ye perceyue my wordes to be true

And yf a man be neuer so wyse
Without me he getteth none bitteraunce
Wherfore his wysdome may not suffyse
Alonely without myne alleageaunce
For I by ryght must nedes enhaunce
A lowe borne man to an hyghe degre
yf that he wyll be ruled by me



Haue I not caused many a noble Warpoure
 To Wyne the batayle by my great myght
 Without me was neuer made conqueroure
 Nor yet man couragious when he dyde fyght
 No man without me may defende his ryght
 I may be worste fro hym forborne
 For and I were not he were forlorne

Dyd not I cause the noble Hercules
 By power to Wyne the victorie
 Of the sturdy and stronge Phylotes
 As is recorded in booke of memory
 For without me can be no chualty
 And vnder the Wyng of my proteccion

All rebelles brought be to subiection

A realme is by holden by thynges thre
The fyrste and the chiefe it is to the swerde
Whiche causeth it to be in good suerty
And other realmes of it to be aferde
By whiche the blurpers be dyfferde
Frome they? wyll with reason knytte
And by me clayne for they? false fyte

The seconde is la we that cuer serueth
(Not els) but in the realme onely
For other nacions our la we ne dredeth
But oure swerde they do fere spycally
For and they rose agaynst vs proude
As they haue done often in tymes past
Yet with oure swerde they shulde be ouercast

The thyrde be marchauntes that do multiply
In this realme welthe and prosperite
For of euery thyng they often occupy
Euery man lyke vnto his faculte
For without marchauntes can not be
No realme byholden in welthe and pleasure
For it to vs is a specyall treasure

Also yet Hercules the puyssaunt gyaunt
Dyde see the monstre afore Troy the great
And with his strokes he dyde hym daunt
They were so puyssauntly on hym sette
That he the byctory on them dyde gette
Had I not be conforste vnto his hartie
Suche byctory had ben layde aparte

Dyde he not baynquesh in the forest of Nemee
The thre mortall lyons by his great hardyness
And ryued they? iawes as was to se

Byt wene his handes by cheualrous prowes
And yet by armes and knyghely exercyses
In egypte he slewe the tyrant Busyre
And bzente hym after in a great fyre

Also he slewe the tyraunt Cacus
For his tyranny and great myschefe
Bycause his dedes were so odypous
For he dyd murther and was a thefe
Wherfore his deth to many was leste
Who more of his actes wyll haue reporte
To the Trojans stozz lette hym resorte

Also the worthy and noble Hectour
That eclypped was the Trojans champion
And of all chpualry called the flour
In his tyme renynge and of great renowne
Of whose noble dedes the brute and so done
Was spred by euery straunge habytacyon
That they of his saytes dyde make relacyon

By his power and myghty courage
He put the grekes full often to flyghte
And bete them do done by a great outrage
That well was he that hym saue myghte
Full often he broughte them to the plyghte
His dedes were pure without ymagynacyon
Or without nygromancy or suche corrupcyon

Dyde I not cause also kynge Dauid
The iawre bones of a lyon to rente and tere
That dyde deuoure the shepe in the fryth
As he sate keepynge of them there
The lyons cruelte myght not hym fere
And he in his youthe so hardy was
That he dyde see the gyaunte Golyas

Ande I not cause the noble Iulys

Emperoure of rome for to be electe
Bycause he was so stronge and chynalrous
Whan in armes he knewe the affecte
He all his enemyes dyd abiecte
And by the supporte of my socoure
He gouerned hymselfe lyke an emperoure

And also arthur kynge of brytayne
With all the knyghtes of the rounde table
Neuer auentures had sought certayne
And I cherte had not ben agreable
They for to fyght had not ben able
And who me lacketh is but a coward
And shame is the fyne of his rewarde

Also kynge Charlemayne kynge of fraunce
With his dyspyeres Bozelande and Olyuer
With all the resydue of his alpaunce
That in all armes so noble were
On goddes enemyes brake many a spere
Cauynge them to flee to theyr great bylany
Hardynes was the cause that they had the victoꝝ

O worthy hardynesse the shynynge sterre
Alway to mannes herte the confozte
Whan that it is the tyme of werre
Unto what party thou resoꝝte
They wyne the batayle by supporte
And where that thou lettest thy bemes descende
They often hye to honour do ascende

Chan sayd dame hardynes vnto the iudge
I praye you that ryght I may haue
Synthen I to man am chese reluge
Whan that helpesth of me to craue
I make hym coragpous & his woꝝshyp saue
Wherfoꝝe I ought to haue the preemyence

By ryght/reason/and good experyence

That I deny you sayd dame sapyence
Of whome haue you your ozdre of pledynge
For ye neuer can haue none intellygence
But by the meane of myne informynge
For I am alwaye your mynde techynge
And without me your tale were but a fable
For ye without wyte shulde alwaye bable

This wyll I proue by myn opynyon
That I am grounde of the artes seven
And of all good woorkes the true conclusyon
For no man without me can go to heuen
My dedes be merueylous for men to neuen
Whan they be brought into theyr degre
Who that wyll lerne them he hath the lyberte

Of my dedes bookes do make recoorde
The whiche clerkes put into remembraunce
For an exemple without dyscorde
Of heuenly waye by vertuous gouernaunce
Without me man can haue no pleasaunce
Nor yet hym rule in no maner wyse
A man without wytte is for to despyse

Hardynes without prudence may not auayle
Thoughe that a man be neuer so sturdy
For a wyse man feble may wyne the batayle
Of hym that is ryght stronge and myghty
For better it is to be ryght wytty
In the defence of his good saue garde
Than often to stryke and to renne for warde

That thyng that hardynes may not wyne
May be gotten by hyghe soucraynte
And with the helpe of subtyll engynne
It may be brought to the extremyte

Where that it myght not by possyblyte
Of hardynesse longe before be wonne
Yet by great wysdome it may be done

Unto dyuers cases I take exceptyon
Of dame hardynes whiche are no lawe
Unto the fyrst vnder your correccyon
She sayd/ and she her power do withdraue
No rebell than shulde stande in a we
And she is the chefe as I knowe well
That causeth hym for to rebell

By her foly and folysshe hardynes
She causeth subiectes to ryle agaynst theyr lord
She is the cause of mortall heuyness
Whan she dothe breke the good conorde
Wherefore me thynke by one accorde
For to exyle her it is now the best
Than man shulde lyue in peas and rest

And where she sayd that she exalted
Iulys Cesar by her great exylence
In that case she ryght clerely barped
For it was I by my great dyligence
That neuer was out of his ptesence
But ruled hym and made hym worthy
To be chosen emperoure of all ytalp

Chosen he was by the comune assent
For the great wysdome that in hym shone
With a great boyce and a hole intent
For lyke vnto hym was there none
That was so able as he alone
For to occupy an emperoures dygnyte
Of his promocyon he myght thanke me

I sayvence am endowd with grace
And the lode sterre of heuenly doctryne

The sprynge of conforste / ioye / and solace
Who that wyll to me for to inclyne
He shall knowe probles of the deuyne
And at his ende beholde the deyte
That is one god and persones thre

It pleased the father that is omny potent
His sone to sende to be incarnate
Of the byrgyn mary the sterre most excellent
Mayden and mother neuer byolate
Lyke a vessel chosen and made ornate
All onely for to be goddes mother
And he hymselfe to be our lord and brother

But a stryfe there was byt wene good and man
Whan man consented to synne dedly
By that the dyscorde fyrst beganne
Whan he the sone of god on hy
That is his brother agayne wyll crucyfy
Yf he had power by whiche is offended
The father of heuen as is intented

Therfore let vs to our brother go
Named Iesu chryst and aske hym mercy
With a good intent and herte also
There is for vs none other remedy
That ony tonge truly can specyfy
And he wyll take it for a correccion
And of all vengeaunce seace the affeccyon

That we may of hym haue forgyuenesse
Of our great synne with reformatyon
Of peas byt wene the fathers hyghnesse
Of heuen and vs in suspyracion
Therfore yf thou drede the admonycon
Of his ryght wysnes loke that thou flee
Myght fast vnto his mercyfull pyte

For his mercy is moze than all our mysery
And eke aboue his werkes all
As dauid sheweth in his prophery
Saynge his mercy is ouer all
To whome I pray euer in especyall
To gyue me grace Well my penne to lede
That quaketh aye often for drede

Dame Sappence sayd I do procede
Of the strength of the holy goost
That is shall be mater in dede
God and lord of myghtes moost
Whose infynyte power was neuer loost
And yet neuer had no begynnynge
But alwaye stronge without endynge

Where that hardynes in her pledynge
Made her selfe to knyghtes moost necessary
By the meanes of her power shewynge
That I by ryght do now well deny
For in that case she dyde moche bary
For syte there are that moze profyte be
Of whiche the lest is better than she

The fyrst is prudence that is the chefe
That tyme doth rule and is his gyde
And kepeth hym from grete represe
And caueth his wo:shyp for to abyde
So euery chrysten man sholde proude
By his wytte to withstande the deuyll
That he consente not to do euyl

The seconde is that he shulde be true
To his loueraigne lord & on hym reyneth
And all treason for euer to eschewe
In whiche grete shame often remayneth
And by whiche he his kynne desteyneth

So a chrysten man shulde be tru euer
To Iesu chryst that was our redemer

The thyrde is that he shulde be lyberall
Amonge his comunys withouten lette
That is the cause euer in generall
That he the loue of them dothe gette
For it causeth theyr hertes on hym to be sette
So euery true chrysten man shulde be
To god intenced with lyberalyte

The fourth is that he shulde be stronge
His ryght euer for to defende
And neuer to no man for to do wronge
But wronges for to dyrecte and amende
As ferre as his power wyll extende
So a chrysten man shulde exclude
All maner of vyces by his fortytude

The fyfth is that he shulde be mercyable
In all his dedes withouten furoure
For that to hym is greatly conuenable
And eke to kepe hym out of erreure
For he of mercy shulde be a myrroure
So vnto them it is ryght necessary
Who that wyll be saued for to haue mercy

The syxte is a knyght ought for to kepe
The pooze people in theyr great nede
That often for hungre and thurst to wepe
He ought with almes them for to fede
And the better he shall than spede
So euery tru chrysten man shulde do
As ferre as his power cometh vnto

I sappence am of the synners counsaile
Whiche is clothed with purple that spynnyeth
The grace and the pulcriteude without faile

Of great vertues that in hym shyneth
For as to vices he neuer inelyneth
Hauynge on his heed a fayre crowne royall
That sheweth his dygnyte to be regall

Whiche to his people is the chiefe glory
Throughe whome his subiectes be dyrecte
And made obedyent to hym certaynly
At euery houre by ryght tru effecte
But ferthermore by good aspecte
He bereth a ball in his lefte hande
The whiche betokeneth as I vnderstande

A kynge to be a good mynistratour
Unto his subiectes in euery place
And to be for theym an exhoratour
As reason requyret in euery case
I sappence do rule his noble grace
In his ryght hande he hath a septure
That dothe sygnify by ryght his rygoure

Transgressours to punyssh for theyr offence
By his ryght wysnes who they shulde loue
Shynynge in vertu by experyence
Dothe not extoll nor yet remoue
A lampe do he hange the heed about
Alwaye lyght and clerely brennyng
Whiche sygnifyeth the mercy of a kynge

The olde phylosophers by theyr prudence
Founde the seuen sciences lyberall
And by theyr exercyse and great dilygence
They made theyr dedes to be memoypall
And also poetes that were fatall
Craftely coloured with cloudy fygures
The tru sentence of all theyr scriptures

O Iustyce lady and souerayne goddess

Gyue you tru sentence now bpon me
As ye be surmountynge in vertu and nobles
Let me dame sapyence haue the soueraynte
As is accorbynge to my ropall dygnyte
For I am most profytable vnto man
And euer haue ben sythen the woylde began

Than sayd dame fortune ye be imperfyte
Withouthat I therto be accordaunte
For all your hardynes and prudence perfyte
I vnto you must be well exuberaunte
And with your woorkes euer concoordaunte
Where that I fauour they haue good consofte
In all theyr dedes by my swete resoite

I fortune am the rule and steere
Of euery persone lyke to my wyll
That in this woylde now lyeth here
Whan that I lust for to fulfyll
My mynde ryght soone I can dystyll
The dewe of consofte welthe and ryches
To man exaltynge hym vnto nobles

Thoughe that a man were neuer so hardy
Withouth me he myght not attayne
And thoughe that a man were neuer so wyttie
And I byd my power from hym refrayne
All his labour were lost in vayne
So hardynes and prudence in no wyse
Withouth good fortune may well suffyse

Thoughe that a man were but a sole
yf I consent that he be fortunate
He nedeth not to make any great dole
For I shall maynteyne so his estate
That he in ryches shalbe so eleuate
Fulfylled with welthe and wooldly treasure

That he shall lacke no maner of pleasure
Where that dame hardynesse wolde afferme
By her cases that are so vnSURE
That she by her power dothe conferme
The knyghtes of byctory for to be sure
Whan she dothe take theyr hertes in cure
Yf fortune be a waye she may not auayle
For they by reason must lose the batayle

Yet ferthermore as I do well consyder
How dame hardynes dyd expresse
Syn the tyme that I came hyder
That she promoted had to worthynes
Hector, Dauid and the noble Hercules
With many other wherof she sayleth
For it was fortune as she well knoweth

For in the olde tyme the noble Warryours
For to escheue euer my great daungere
In whiche tyme they were ydolesours
Than they to put hym out of fere
To ydolles wente that theyr goddes were
For to haue answere that they shulde wyne
The batayle stronge or they dyd begynne

To plede I nede not by longe contynuaunce
As dame sapyence dyd in maters hy
It were of tyme but dyscontynuaunce
But o dame Justyce the gentyll lady
Loke that ye iudge my mater ryght wysely
That I of hardynes may be the pryncypall
And of dame prudence and nature withall

Than sayd dame nature that may not be
As I can proue by ryght and reason
For I am most conforste to humanyte
As man well knoweth at euer season

And can not be forborne nor in obliuion
For where I lacke without ony delay
Man is but deed and turned to clay

That nature gyueth by her power
Wysdome nor hardynesse may not defete
For I to man am the chiefe doer
Durynge his lyfe without retrete
Also dame fortune may not well lete
Me of my course thoughe she it thought
In sondre maners my dedes are so wrought

Thoughe that a man were infortunable
And though that he were neuer so folysshe
And a great coward to fyght not able
Yet shulde he lyue and neuer perysshe
Till that my power of hym dothe synysse
Whiche fayle must ones it is my propre
And that was gyuen me by the deyte

I am the orygynall of mannes creacyon
And by me alwaye the worlde dothe multiply
In welthe pleasure and delectacyon
As I wylle she we in this party
My dedes be subtyll and wrought craftely
What were the worlde yf I were not
It myght be called a wypper knot

The lawe of nature dothe man bynde
Bothe beest foule and fysshe also
In theyr degre so do theyr kynde
Blame them not yf they do so
For harde it is euer to ouergo
The kynde of nature in her degre
For euery thyng must she we his propre

Who of theyr proprietes wylle stoys rede
Let hym loke in the booke of bartholomewe

And to his scripture take good hede
That ryght nobly of them dothe shewe
With all theyr actes beyng not a felwe
But wonderous many by alteracyon
For lyke hath to his lyke his operacyon

I nature nouryshe by myne affeccion
Mannes humayne parties superfluous
I am the spryng of his complexyon
The fountayne of his beynes generall
Conseruatyue to man most dere and spryall
Thoughe he be hardy & wyse he may not me forbere
Nor fortune without me auayleth not an heere

Wherfore dame Justyce be not you indyfferent
Consider that I am moost dere and lefe
To every man that is equyvalent
And aboue all medycynes to hym most chefe
And by my strengthe vnto his relefe
In his dysseale/Wherfore in that may be
Iought of reason to haue the soueraynte

Than spake dame Justyce with meke countenaunce
I wyll all your contrauersy now redresse
For I of your reasons haue good perseueraunce
And after your cases bothe more and lesse
Wherfore I Justyce by my ryght wysenesse
Gyue now vpon you a fynall iudgment
That ye four agree by one assent

Man for to please at every houre
Without dysgrement or contradyccion
And in his nede to do hym socoure
With lounge herte and tru affeccion
And he shalbe in your good tyepon
And you in hym his woorkes shal redres
And of his lyfe and manersto be the gouernes

Than sayd dame hardynes I agre thereto
And so dyd I than sayd dame Sappence
Than sayd dame fortune and also I do
Agre vnto dame Justyce sentence
And I dame nature wyll do my dylygence
Lyke as ye do man for to please
And hym to strengthe in all his dyscase

With that dame Justyce vp arose
Unto the ladies she sayd than farewell
And wente into her chambre close
Called it was consence where she dyd dwell
As dame dyscrecyon dyd me tell
Than hardynes and fortune went do wne the steyre
And after them dame nature most clere and fayre

¶ Capitulum. viii.

Dame Sappence taried a lytell whyle
Behynde the other ladies with dyscrecyon
And shortly beganne she to laughe and smyle
Demaundyng of hym how he stode in condycyon
Well he sayd and in good perfectyon
But best it is she sayd that ye maryed be
For to eschewe all yll sensualyte

I knowe a lady of merueylous beaute
Spronge out of hyghe and noble lynage
Replete with vertu and full of bounte
Whiche vnto you were a good maryage
For she is comen of royall parentage
But harde it wyll be to get her loue
Without pouche fraylte do soze reprove

I knyled do wne than vpon my kne
Besore dame Sappence with humble chere
Besechyng her of me to haue pyte
And also Dyscrecyon her syster dere.

Than dame sapience came to me nere
Sayenge youthe wyll ye haue a wyfe
And loue her and no mo durynge her lyfe

Ye my lady that wolde I sayne
Yf that she be fayre and byght
I wyll her loue euermore certayne
And please her alway with all my myght
Of suche a person I wolde haue a syght
With all my herte now at this houre
Wolde to god I had so fayre a floure

Than sayd dyscrecyon there is a kyng
Dwellynge ferre hens in a fayre castell
Of whome I ofte haue herde talkynge
Whiche hath a doughter as I you tell
I trowe that youthe wyll lyke her well
She is ryght good eke fayre and pure
As I repute me to dame nature

But yf that youthe shulde her go seke
Ye must syster than hym well indue
With your great power so good and meke
That he all traylte may escheue
For many tymes it dothe pursue
On hym by flattery and great temptacyon
That shall bynge hym in trybulacyon

As for that sayd she he shall not care
For he shall theym soone ouercome
And of theyr flattery ryght well be ware
For I to hym shall gyue great wyfdoome
Theyr dedes to withstande and make them domme
Wherfore dere syster as I you praye
Unto her lede hym now on the waye

Loke that ye sende me in his necessyte
By dame wyfnes full soone a letter

By whiche that I may knowe the certayne
That I am come to ayde hym better
So that fraylte to hym be no freter
And thoughe I be not alway bysyble
With hym my power he hathc inuynceble

Than sayde dame Sappence to dyscrecyon
Fare well dere syster I may not tary
Loke ye of youthe haue the curyon
That ye fall not into bayne glozy
And that ye puruey for hym shortly
That he may wedde the fayre dame clennesse
Whiche for her loue haue ben in duresse

With that dame Sappence doone went
Into her place that was the doctrynell
Of famous clerkes in cunynge splendent
A myrrour of lernynge that was dyuynall
With all the craftes artfycyall
Before her dame fortune went to her mancyon
And the dame hardynesse to her habytacyon.

Dyscrecyon went forth and so dyd I
Out of the castell vnto a grene
Where bydes lange with great melody
There daunced also the fayre quene
Besyde a tpuer named E phespyne
ouer whiche we went to the other syde
That was a medowe longe and wyde

Longe there we wandred tyll at the last
We came vnto a ryght great wyldernesse
By that tyme Phobus was ouer past
Wherfore we walked in great derkenesse
The whiche to me was great heuynesse
For Lucina eke dyd her shroude
Under a blacke and mysty cloude



For she was horned and nothynge clere
And entred into the sygne of Capricorne
Ryght ferre frome Phebus fulgent spere
And not agaynst hym the crowne had woꝛne
I went by and doꝛne tyll at the moꝛne
That Phebus his golden beames had spredde
Than dyscrepon farther forth me ledde .

Amonge thornes sharpe and beestes wyld
There was the lyon wolfe and beere
But I coude mete nother man ne chyld
But many serpentis that dyd me fere

And by a swete smell I knewe a pantere
So forth I went by longe contynuaunce
Till that I sawe a bergere of pleasaunce

To whiche I toke anon my way
Where as I sawe a lady excellent
Bydyng on a gote in freshe aray
Byght yonge of aage and lusty of intent
Prayenge me to her for to assent
As to fulfill the flesshly pleasure
Whiche she desyred me out of mesure .

Ray sayd dyscrecyon that may not be
No sayd I in no maner of wyse
To her request I wyll not agre
But evermore her soule lust despyse
For I my selfe do now aduise
To kepe me chaste that I may mary
Fayre dame clennes that noble lady .

Capitulum.

So forth I went walkyng on my iourney
Meetyng a lady olde and amiable
Syttyng in a castell bothe frenshe and gaye
On an Olyphantes backe in strengthe so stable
Whiche it to bere was good and able
Hauyng in her hande a cuppe of golde
Sette with ryche perles many a folde .

She sayd she was the lady of ryches
The quene of welthe and worldly glozy
Prayenge me to company with her noblesse
And she than wolde promote me shortly
To innumerable ryches & make me worthy
Where I am pooze and set by nought.

¶



By her to worshyp I shulde be brought

Unto her I answered I wolde not so
As for to hunte in the parke of pryde
The whiche to clenness is mortall so
But with dyscrecyon I wyll abyde
Whiche dothe a wyfe for me prouyde
By whome I shall haue the possessyone
Of heuenly kyngdome and great renowne

So forthe I went and had great trauaple
Without the conforste of ony persone
Sawe of dyscrecyon whiche byd me counsaile
As she went walkynge with me alone
Unto her I made full great mone

And lykened the Wyldernesse by moꝛall sence
Unto worldly trouble by good experyence

She sayd the fyrst lady that I dyd mete
Called she was dame Sensualyte
Whiche well can flater with wordes swete
Causynge a man to fall in fragylte
And so to haunte the carnall traylte
Whiche vnto clenness is abhomynable
For they in woꝛke be greatly varyable

The secunde was pryde endued with couetyse
A lady of ryght frutles medytacyon
Delytynge greatly in the synne of auaryce
The whiche is cause of her dampnacyon
For she by her false suppoꝛtacyon
Blyndeth many a mannes consyence
And causeth ryght to stande in absence

So ferther I went tyll at the last
I was in a mase goynge in and oute
There was none other waye I was agaste
But for the I walked in great doubte
Now here now there and so rounde aboute
Than sayd vnto me dame Dyscrecyon
Ye are in the busynes of worldly operacyon

Therin I trauailed by a longe space
Tyll that I mette a lady gloꝛyous
Indued with vertu and great grace
To whome I sayd lady pꝛecyous
As ye seme to be good and vertuouſ
I pou beseeche now without delaye
Unto dame Clemens to teche me the waye

I happence now we wyll she we to the
The ryght waye vnto saynt clenness
Vertu.

And yf thou Wyl be ruled by me
Thou shalt mary that noble prynces
I Wyl be ruled as pou Wyl doubteles
Dyscrepon sayd she wolde be his surete
Sappence sayd no better myght me

Than sayd dyscrepon to dame sappence
Welcome to us my syster dere
And I to her dyd humble reuerence
Sapence who thought to haue founde you here
Yes she sayd I haue ben nere
you oftentimes syth my departynge
And haue ben cause of your good gydyng

¶ Capitalum. r.



Come on your waye walke on a pace
for ye longe for to haue a syght
Of dame clenness so fayre of face
So goodly of body in beaute bryght
That there can not be so fayre a wyght
So forth we walked to a ryuer syde
That ebbd and flowd at euery tyde

Than I sawe a castell and a palays royall
Wylde with marble blacke as the iette
With glasse wyndowes as clere as crystall
Whiche on the other syde was sette
No man to the castell myght gette
But ouer the water on a lytell brydge
Not halfe so brode as an house rydge

But as I cast myne eyes than asyde
I sawe a lady wonderous fayre
Demure of countenaunce without pryde
Than wente herselfe for to repayre
By the waters syde for to take the ayre
Beholde and se than sayd dame Sappence

yonder is dame Clennes the sterre of excellence

Full glad was I than in my mynde
For to se that floure of complacence
The syght of her dyd my herte bynde
Euer her to loue with persynge influence
To her I sayd o Well of contynence
Unto your grace I wolde go fayne
This daungerous water dothe cause me to refrayne

To me she answered than agayne
Sayenge this wolde withouten mys
Is but a banyte and nothyng certayne
In lyke maner as this water is
ye can not come to me þus
But by that bydge that dothe go ouer
This stormy and troublous wayynge wate.

Therof sayd sapyence he shall not lette
Well sayd Clennes be þou his gyde
And Dyscrecyon also for to be sette
For to by holde hym to the other syde
That he do not into the water syde
So to the bydge they dyd me lede
I quaked than for fere and drede

I sawe there wyten this lyterall sence
No man this bydge may ouergo
But he be pure without necligence
And stedfast in goddes bylcue also
yf he be ygnoraunt and do not so
He must nedes into this water fall
And so to lose his lyfe terrestryall

They ledde me ouer this bydge so peryllous
Till that I came to a pryuy place
Were were wyten with letters gloryous
This is the kyngdome of the great grace

And yf thou Wylle be ruled by me
Thou shalt mary that noble prynces
I Wylle be ruled as you Wylle doubtles
Dyscrepon sayd she wolde be his surete
Sappence sayd no better myght me

Than sayd dyscrepon to dame sappence
Welcome to us my syster dere
And I to her dyd humble reuerence
Sapence who thought to haue founde you here
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Capitalum. r.



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Of dame clenness so fayre of face
So goodly of body in beaute byght
That there can not be so fayre a wyght
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By the waters syde for to take the ayre
Beholde and se than sayd dame Sappence

yonder is dame Clemmes the sterre of excellence

Full glad was I than in my mynde
For to se that floure of complacence
The syght of her dyd my herte bynde
Euer her to loue with persynge influence
To her I sayd o Well of contynence
Unto your grace I wolde go fayne
This daungerous water dothe cause me to refrayne

To me she answered than agayne
Sayenge this worlde withouten mys
Is but a vanyte and nothyng certayne
In lyke maner as this water is
ye can not come to me p'wys
But by that bydge that dothe go ouer
This stormy and troublous waynyng wate.

Therof sayd sapyence he shall not lette
Well sayd Clemmes be pou his gyde
And Dyscrecyon also for to be lette
For to by holde hym to the other syde
That he do not into the water syde
So to the bydge they dyd me lede
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No man this bydge may ouergo
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And stedfast in goddes bylcue also
yf he be ygnoraunt and do not so
He must nedes into this water fall
And so to lose his lyfe terrestriall

They ledde me ouer this bydge so peryllous
Till that I came to a pryuy place
Were were wyten with letters glozuous
This is the kyngdome of the great grace

No man by honde this marke may trace
 But yf he be brought in by dame Wylsome
 yf he so be he is moche Welcome

So ferthermoze yet for the we went
 Into a hall that was solacys
 Made of pprecous stones splendent
 That them to se it was wonderous
 They were sette so goodly and plentuous
 That the hall paued was for the nones
 With none other grauell but pprecous stones



Here was dame clennes that lady gent
 And eke her father the kynge of loue
 He satte in a chayre ryght clere and excellent

At the upper ende of the hall aboue
He sate still and dyd not remoue
Gyde with wyldes and myght not se
No maner thyng in his degre

He had two wynges ryght large and grete
And his body also was naked
And a darte in his ryght hande was sette
And a torche in his lefte hande brenned
A botell aboute his necke hanged
His one legge armed and naked the other
Hym for to se it was a wonder

Sapience had me meruaile nothyng
For she wolde she we me the sygnifycacyon
Why he so sate by shorte rekenyng
Accordyng to a moralyzacyon
Now of the fyrst to make relacyon
Loue shulde be gyde with stablyte
Without which loue can haue nouerte

Loue may not se but is alway blynde
And weneth no man can haue perceuraunce
Where that he loueth by naturall kynde
But he do she we hym by wordes of bitteraunce
Thoughe he be dayeth hym by countenaunce
For harde it wyll be loue so to couere
But that some man shall it perceure

Also his nakednes dothe sygnify
That true loue nothyng elles despyeth
But the very persone and eke body
That he well and feruently loueth
His wynges also well betokeneth
The greatest wyfines to euery persone
That he dothe loue so well alone

And also loue is stryken With a darte
That maketh a man for to complayne
Whan that it hath wounded soze his herte
It bienneth as the fyre dothe certayne
That loue his purpose gladly wolde attayne
And is euer moze bothe hote and drye
Tyll his lady gyue hym drynke of mercy

His one legge is armed to defende
The ryght that longeth vnto amyte
And Wronge loue for to amende
His naked legge betokeneth charyte
That is the ioye of great felcYTE
So charyte ryght loue and good con corde
With stablynnesse reygneeth in this myghty lorde

Capitulum. xi.

Than for the me ladde good same sapyence
Before that myghty lordes maieste
Come on she sayd put the in pzenesse
That thou mayst se dame clenness beaute
Bondre in thy mynde by veryte
That so fayre as she was not quene Heleyne
Quene Apolyte nor yonge polexyne

This lady is clene without corrupcyon
And wereth thre crownes for her byrgnyte
One is for people of perfyte relygyon
Another for maydens keepynge chastyte
The thyrde for true wydoers as thou mayst se
I wyll the now to her father pzenesse
Her for to mary yf she wyll consente

Than sayd dame Sapyence o noble emperoure
O souerayne lorde and royall potestate
O byctoious pryncce and famous conqueroure
O kynge of loue and seacer of debate

To the no creature may saye chekemate
I pꝛesent to the no we this vertuons knyght
For to mary clennes your doughter byght.

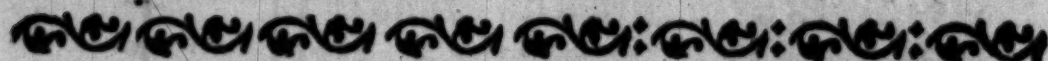
I thanke you he sayd for your good wyll
But he that to clennes maryed must be
He must my commaundment fyꝛst fulfyll
As to dysconfyte the dragon with hedes thye
That is a serpent of great subtylte
Whiche well bytokeneth as we do fynde
The worlde the flesshe and the deuyl by kynde

Sapience sayd I shulde not faple
To do his commaundment for clennes sake
As for to sle the dragon in batayle
That laye in a mares in a great lake
Whiche was moche stynkyng foule and blake
Wysdome bade me not to be asfride
For she wolde gyue me a shelde and swerde

And arme me also with sayre armure
To baynquyshe the dragon so freshe and great
She sayd it shulde be so good and sure
That I of hym no harme shulde gette
Thoughe he on me his tethe had sette
Yet shulde I sle hym for all his myght
By my great strokes whan I dyd fyght

Fyꝛst she my legge harneys sette on
And after my plakarde of great ryches
She armed me her selfe alone
And laced my helme of great gentylnes
I thanked her for her great goodnes
Than gaue she me the swerde and shelde also
Sayenge lette us to the dragon go.

This is the armure for the soule
 That in his epytyle wrote saynt Poule
 Good hope thy legge harneys shalbe
 The habergpn of rygh wysenes gyde with chastyte
 Thy plakarde of busynes w braunches of almes dede
 Thy shelde of beleue and mekenes for the hede
 Thy swerde shalbe for to defende
 The worde of god / and the deuyl to blynde



Come Sapience and I dyd take our lylence
 Of the kynge of loue in vertu depured
 And of his doughter shynynge in excellence

Whiche to me sayd With wordes assured
O vertuous knyght you haue for me dured
In great wo and peyne but thynke you berely
To dysconforte that dragon by wysdome shortly

Than wente he forth to that serpent
In merueylous trauayle of sorowe and bale
By that tyme the daye was ryght ferre spent
And Phebus his course began to auale
But at the last we came into a dale
Where we felte the sauour of a dungyon
Of the foule and stynkyng dragon

Here to that dragon there was a way
That men bled vpon a fayre hyll
Unto hygge heuen so freshe and gay
But that dragon dyd lette them of theyr wyll
And by the waye he dyd them kyll
Byngyng them vnto the dungyon
Called it was the great oblyuon

I had not be there halfe an houre
But that this dragon me approched
As thoughe that he wolde me deuoure
He so ferly than on me marchyd
The batayle byt wene ys longe contynued
But he had me ryght soone ouercome
Saue onely in my helpe was good dame wysdome

I stroke at hym fast with my swerde
And with my shelde I dyd me defende
Wysdome had be not be aserde
But that my strokes I shulde amende
As ferre as my myght wolde extende
So by her wordes I plucked by my herte

Vertu.

f.i.

And byd than vnto the dragon sterte

But he caught me than in his clawes

And so we wasteled longe togpyder

But he helde me sharpely in his palwes

Tyll wyfloome my feblenes byde consyder

Beholde the sayd dame clenues ponder

Than as alyde I cast all my syght

I sawe that laoy so pure and bygyht

My strength than dobeled an hundred folde

And I from hym brake by vertuons prowes

My herte was warme that afoze was colde

With the comfortable syght of sayre dame clenues

Than I to hym gaue strokes of cress

And with my sharpe worde cut of anone

Two of his heedes leynge hym but one

These two heedes by good mo:all sens

The worlde and the flesshe do sygnify

As I in scripture haue intellygence

The fyrst the worlde that is transitory

Lyeth byt wene man and heuenly glory

Lettyng hym often of his passage

If it of hym can gette auantage

The seconde is the fleschly desyre

That trobeleth a man ryght sore within

Settyng his courage vpon a fyre

Causyng hym to enclyne to deedly syn

His flesshe the batayll of hym doth wynn

Often byngyng hym in to dampnacyon

If repentaunce were not his saluacyon

Repentaunce alway requyrez mercy

And penaunce to god is a satysfaccyon

For god despyeth euermore trucly

In humble herte full of contricyon

And the world despiseth restitution
Of goodes that han be gotten wrongfull
To be restozed vnto the ryghtfull party

Whan I by wysdom had won the victorie
Of these two heedes I was ryght glad
His thyrd heed marched aenit me sharply
But I my swerde in my hande had
Strykinge at hym with strokes sad
And blode of hym coude I drawe none
For he had neyther fleshe ne bone

But at the last I dyd hym baynquyshe
Dryuynge hym home to his derke regyon
Of infernall payne that shall not synyshe
For hell is called his propre mancyon
And of all other of his oppnyon
That do the preceptes of god forsake
And to denelyche werkes them do betake

God by his ryght wysnes made a lawe
By whiche man for deedly synne is condempned
If god his vengeaunce do not withdraue
In euerlastynge payne he sholde be prysoned
But and man mercy of hym requyzed
With penytent herte he sholde it haue
And with his mercy he wyll man saue

¶ Capitulum. xij.

Whan I had scomfyte this serpent venymous
Sappence to me ryght gentilly sayd
Blyssed be god ye are so gracyous
That ye shall marye Clennes the mayde
But ret er whyles ye were a frayde
Ye I sayd and sweet full ryght soze
Tyll ye newe strength dyde me restoze

This batayll was grete and longe endured

Whiche caused me to be ryght wery
But sapyence With her wordes me mured
With walles of conforzte makynge me mery
Come on she sayd and walke on lyghtly
Unto the castell that we came fro
I answered to her that I wolde do so

Than forthe we wente a great pace
Tyll that we came at the castell syde
There mette vs ladyes with great solace
And welcomed vs at the same tyde
So fayre a sorte in the worlde so wyde
May not be founde by no maner of reason
As I sawe there at the same season

The fyrste lady that dyde vs mete
Named she was dame Perseueraunce
Whiche to me sayd With wordes swete
Blessed be god of your good gouernaunce
He hath you kepte frome the encombraunce
Of the serpent with the hedes thre
And caused you the byctour of hym to be

Than came dame fepthe that lady glozvous
Welcome she sayd With wordes amiable
I am ryght glad ye are so byctozvous
Of that foule dragon so abhomynable
She sayd that I was euer moze stable
In her in dede word and thought
Orels my labour had ben for nought

Than spake the lady fayre dame charyte
Welcome vertu thou noble gentylman
Sythen that ye alway haue loued me
fro the fyrst season that ye began
Bothe in your youthe and sythen ye were a man
ye haue had me in humble reuerence

And ruled you were by my prouydence

Than sayd dame praper in my presence

Ye neuer cast me in oblyuynce

By no slouth nor worldly necligence

But haue had me in great remembraunce

Whiche hath ben to me very great pleasaunce

Wherfore welcome vertu my swetest and dere

Unto this castell that ye se here

Than to me came dame loue with lovolynes

Clyppynge me harde with louely chere

Byddynge me welcome with great gladnes

As by her countenaunce it dyd well appere

Come on she sayd vnto me nere

So than amonge these fayre ladyes all

Of the great castell I went into the hall

And there mete me dame clennes blyue

And dame grace bare by her trayne

Whiche euer to her was affyrmatyue

Frome whome dame clennes myght not refrayne

Than sayd she to me I am ryght fayne

That ye be comen into this place

Where ye shall wedde me in shorte space

Vpon my kne than kneled I do wone

Sayenge o sterre of the blysse eterne

O well of vertu and of great renowne

O deuyne conforzte and sempytterne

Whan I your beaute do so well decerne

Ye sette my herte vpon a brennyng fyre

With feruent loue to come to my desyre

To me she answered in this wyse

O my dere herte my spouse so pure

Why do ye not on your fete aryse

Vertu.

f. 14.

you of my true loue shall be sure
For ye my herte haue now in cure
Let vs go now to our fader reuerente
So forth vnto hym than we wente

Whan that we came afoze his fayze face
Dame clenues made curtesye vnto the grounde
Saynge O fader kyng of grete grace
This knyght to loue ye are now bounde
And so am I for I haue often founde
Grete kyndenes on hym bothe nyght and day
For he hath loued me ryght well alwaye

Welcome he sayd ryght noble knyght
How haue ye done sythens your departynge
Haue ye scomfyted with your myght
The merueylous dragon so greteky stynkynge
Ye I sayd with the power shynynge
Of my maystresse good dame sapyence
I dyoe hym daynquyt he by her experyence

Where is dame Sapyence than sayd he
And eke her syster dame dyscrecyon
Syr I sayd they are comen with me
And they haue had me in iurisdycyon
Syns my departynge without destruccyon
Than spake dame sapyence by her faculte
Vnto that myghty lordes mageste

Saynge this knyght than clyped vertue
Hath loued your doughter by longe coutynuaunce
With stable loue so faythfull and true
And for her sake hath put to bitteraunce
The heedred dragon by wyse puruysaunce
Wherfore me thynke he ought to mary
your doughter clenues that noble lady

The kynge sayd me thynke the same
If that my doughter wyll agre
And she do not she moche is to blame
Consyderynge his wyldome and grete beaute
Come hether he sayd my doughter fre
To be wyfe to vertue wyll ye consent
Ye fader she sayd with hole entent

Than he called vnto his presence
Perseueraunce charyte and fydeltye
With lowlynes prayer and intellygence
She wynged vnto them the certeynte
How clennes his doughter wedded shall be
Vnto me now vertue in all goodly hast
Before that thre dayes be ryght fully past

He called me than to his magnyfycence
Byddynge me go to bed and to rest
In the chambze of clene conscience
Than so to do I thought it the best
For phebus was turned in to the west
So sapyence and I wente forth to bed
For lacke of rest oppressed was my heed

Altyll whelpe within this chambze was
That laye wakynge and barked alwaye
That no man in to it sholde pas
That wolde with conscience make a fraye
I dyde slepe there tyll that it was daye
Than by I rose and made mercy
Callynge vnto me dame sapyence shortly

Saynge vnto her o lady and maystres
O comfortable salve vnto eury soze
O fountayne of welth & carbounle of clerenes
Without ye helpe me I am forloze

Wherfore I shewe you as now befoze
Without I mary saye dame clennes
I shall endure in mortall heuyness

Therof sayd she be nothyng adzedde
For ye shall mary her ryght soone
By me your mater shalbe well spedde
And this same daye it shall be doone
Aboute the houre truly of noone
And there shalbe at your good dyner
Charyte/feythe/penaunce/and prayer

Dame Sappence byd lede me into a gardeyne
Where clennes was amonge floures swete
Her to repayre without dysdoyne
As I to her went she byd me mete
Byngynge me a floure called a margarete
Whiche is a floure ryght swete and precyous
Indued with beaute and moche vertuons

This floure I kyssed often ryght swetely
Settynge it nere vnto my herte
Dame clennes loked vpon me loueyngly
Sayenge that I shulde not departe
Tyll she had shewed me a great couerte
So with her I wente without delaye
Where as bydes sate on many a spraye

By this tyme Phebus had begon
His ascencypall course in great byghtness
Into the sygne of the furpous lyon
Explynge the feuerous frosty coldness
And dep:pyng the noypall derkeness
And also Sethrus his fragrant brythe
Dystylled had vpon euery hethe

Chan vnto her I sayd my lady dere

Beholde this Weder so clere and sapre
How royall Walkynge that it is here
Lyke a place of pleasure you to repayre
Amonge the floures so swete of ayre
Another she had as she me tolde
Byghter than phebus a thousande folde

This is a place of recreacyon
My mynde to consozte after study
In welthe pleasure and delectacyon
For yf I shulde my selfe applye
Euer to praye to god on hye
Withouthis place I may not be sure
An other tyme in prayer to endure

But the other garden is celestyall
That longeth to vs by enherytaunce
And is enayled to vs in generall
For our cleue lyfe and vertuous gouernaunce
Who that vs loueth without doubtaunce
With vs shall go to eternall gloze
In shortly space oze to purgatoze

Than forth we wente to her father royall
Whiche welcomed vs by great humylte
Sayenge my daughter dere and spectrall
ye shall this daye by great solemnyte
Be wedded to vertue with benygnyte
We kneled downe and thanked his grace
And than forth we went to another place

Capitulum. xiiij.



Into a chapell gayly glozfyed
And also hanged with clothe of tyllue
A place it was ryght greatly cōfyed
The rose was set with stones of vertue

Vertu.

G. i.



As with rubyes and emeraudes bryght of hue
The robe lyste was yuery garnyshe with golde
Sette with dyamoundes ryght many a folde

There I dyd se the arke of god
With many sayntes that suffered martyrdome
And also I sawe there moyses rod
And saynt Austyn that brought chrystendome
Into Englande by his great wysdome
And the .xii. apostles that fast gan wyte
Of our beleue and eke dyd endyte

There was saynt Peter the noble pope
That dyd stande on the ryght syde

Of the hyghe auter in a ryche cope
Dame clennes and I dyd there abyde
And by there came than at that tyde
Dame prayer with her syster charyte
And eke dame penytence with humylte

Than came dame faythe anone to vs
With ryght wysnes pease and dame mercy
With daunt contrycyon gay and glorvous
Whiche after them dyd not tary
And than came Bede and eke saynt Gregor
With saynt ambrose the noble doctour
Whiche of our faythe was a good protectour

Than came the kynge of seruent loue
Led with Argos in goodly wyse
Without whome he myght not remoue
Frome his sete by ryght prudent gyse
Who loueth Argos wyll not deuyse
Nor yet begynne no maner of thyng
Without in his mynde he se good endyng

Also saynt Jerome the noble cardynall
Came by to vs by humble reuerence
Whiche euermore was a good doctrynall
Prechyng to vs by vertuous influence
With exhortacyon of deuyne complacence
And foure byshoppes in great bygnpte
Ryght conyng concernyng vnto the deyte

On hym wayted by great dplygence
And neuer dyd forsake his company
But hym obeyed by good experyence
And fro his commaundment dyd not vary
But in a chapell they dyd there tary
And than saynt Jerome went to the kynge

Vertu.

G.ij.

Of feruent loue vnto hym sayenge

O ampyable kynge seacer of debate

O ioyner of vertu and well of knyghte

O royallemyperoure o souerayne estate

O messenger of feruent ampte

O feruent darte of cordvall ppyrpte

Here is your doughter saye dame clenness

That must be maryed with good ryght wysenes

Unto vertue the louely knyght

Whiche the batayle now we hathe won

By dame saypence helpe and myght

Of the foule thre heded dragon

This maryage by me shalbe don

Go ye now streyght into your tabernacle

Whiche is to you most propre habytacle

Than the souerayne kynge to hym dyd call

Dame septe/dyscrecyon/and dame saypence

With dame contrycyon and charyte withall

And eke dame mercy and dame penytence

Unto them sayenge ye haue intellygence

That this daye clenness my doughter dere

Shalbe maryed to vertu that ye se here

Than they dyd all come vnto me

With dame peas and dame grace

And after them came dame byrgynyte

Whiche in her armes dyd me enbrace

Sayenge that I was to her great solace

Gyuyng me vnto my good maryage

I go wone of syluer of great parentage

She gaue another of the same

Unto dame clenness puttynge it on

Upon her backe withouten blame

After whiche clennes wente anone
Unto her father herselfe alone
And I with saynt Jerome dyd there tarpe
To wedde dame clennes that noble lady.

And all the ladies with meke countenaunce
Dyd stande in orde besyde the closette
Of clennes father without resystance
Whiche hanged was gaply with blew velvet
And with perles and rubyes richely sette
Than forth came clennes with two angels ledde
And theyr golden wynges abrode were spredde

Dame grace after her bare by her trayne
And .xv. ladies dyd her ensue
Fyrst went dame humplyte certayne
And after her than dyd pursue
Dame feythe in stableness so true
Ledyng with her the saye dame please
That welthe and riches dothe will increase

Than wente dame reason with perseueraunce
And than dame mercy with contrycyon
And than exerceple with remembraunce
After whome went dame restyucyon
With dame praiser and dame confessyon
And dame charyte with obedyence
And after them came dame abstinence

Saynt Jerome dyd make there condycyon
Of dame clennes and me in matrymonye
With heuenly wordes and vertuous operacyon
And the angels came downe fro the heuen on hye
As saynt Mychaell with Gabryell and ycher archye
To helpe saynt Peter the masse to synge
The organs went and the belles dyd ryng

My prync for feblenes may not natw wypte
Nor my tongue for domnes may not expresse
Nor my mynde for nescygenes may not endyte
Of the angelycall ioye and swete gladnes
That I sawe there without heynesse
And whan this weddyng sacred was and synnyshed
The angels to heuen than shortly they banysched

Than downe I went into the hall
Wher ordeyned was by great solempnyte
A dyner most bertuous and celestyall
To whiche came my wyfe full of benygnyte
On the one syde led by good auctoryte
With saynt Edmund the noble kynge
And martyr, whiche dyd her downe bynge

And she was lorde on the other syde
With saynt Edward the kynge and confessor
And so bytvene them went this byrde
To whome all the ladyes made great honoure
As alway serupnge her without erreure
And a lytell while anone after her
Argos brought her downe her noble father

The kynge of loue than late hym downe
At the table for that tyme to ete
Causynge dame clennes for her renoune
On his syde than for to be sette
And I on the other without ony lette
And besyde me sapyence and dyscrecyon
And than by them late dame contracyon

Than late saynt Edward with byrgnyte
And also hym late dame obedyence
Saynt Edmund and dame charyte
And than dame prayer with dame abstyence

And than dame seyth the synnyng in excellence
With saynt Jerome and saynt Austeyne
And than saynt Gregor without dysdeyne

There was two angels holdyng fast
The table clothe at every ende
Knelynge done humbly and stedfast
They goobly seruyce was to commende
Other there were that dyd attende
Us for to serue with they great dylgence
(That in them founde) coude be no necligence

There dyd saynt Peter by great holynes
Serue vs of our bette lordes body
Fyrst he serued the father of clennes
And after that serued her hostly
With charyte seyth he and dame mercy
And I with dyscrecyon and and dame sapyence
Of saynt Peter was serued with great indulgence

So dame obedyence with contricyon
With saynt Edward and byrgnyte
In lyke wyse were serued without corrupcyon
And saynt Edmund with dame charyte
And saynt Jerome with dame humylyte
With saynt Austyn and saynt Gregor
What nede I lenger of them speky

This was a feest most bette and pryous
To fede the soule with deuyne conforste
This was a meet most dere and glozyous
That causeth all men for to resoyste
To sempyternall lyfe and conforste
Than saynt Ambrose beyng in deuyne
After our meet gaue vs good wyne

By this tyme was J. xl. yeres olde
Vertu.

And despyed for to lyue in peas
For I beganne to growe two folde
And my feblenes dyd soze encrease
For nature her strengthe than dyd cease
Wherfore after this ghostly fest
I thought With my wyfe to abyde in rest

And I to her sayd With lounge chere
O my swete spouse moost fayre and beauteous
To me euer ryght lefe and dere
Where is your lande that is solacys
You shewed me of your garden glozvous
Unto whiche now fayne wolde I go
There for to dwell and you also

Syr she sayd the angell Raphaell
Shall with these martyres & noble confessours
Byrynge you thyder With them to dwell
Where ye shall se all your progenytours
With many sayntes and glozvous auctours
This lande is heuen that to vs longeth
As our euydence the gospell telleth

Than came my father in lawe to vs
Sayenge by ryght I dyd conbynde
Clennes my daughter With vertu ptecyous
And you must I loue by naturall kynde
For on you now is all my mynde
Afore hym I kyst my wyfe moost swetely
For we loued togyder hote and truly

Than came my good angell to me
Causynge me With hym for to go
With clennes my wyfe Where I dyd se
The peynes of hell full of great wo
There was the dragon that I dyd slo

Bounde With chaynes in the fyre infernall
With the seven deedly synnes in generall

Than my good angell to me sayde
yf he had loued dame sensuall
The Whiche With you dyd make a bryde
ye had ben dampned by ryght and equyte
Into this pytte most full of iniquyte
Wherfore thanke you god y hathe sent you wyldome
Suche deedly perelles for to ouercome

Also the lady With the cup of golde
Is here condemned for her great pryde
In endeles payne bothe hote and colde
Wherin for synne she shall abyde
This is a dongeon longe and and wyde
Made for them that do synne deedly
And of chryst Ihesu Wyl aske no mercy

This is a place full of all derkenesse
Wherin be serpentis foule and odious
This is a place of mortall heuynesse
Where I sawe deuylles blacke and tedious
Dampned soules tormented With hokes rygorious
This is the hyppermost parte of hell
In Whiche paynymes dampned do dwell

For asmoche as they lacked instructyon
For to byleue in god omnyppotent
They haue deserued the lesse correccion
Yet they payne haue none extynguyshment
For they be dampned by true sentment
For they byleue and false ydolatry
That made they goddes of Mars and Mercury

Than Wente we do Wne to another haute
Where ieddes dyd lye in great paynes stronge

Whome deuylles tormented by great assaute
Drauyng them with hokes alonge
For they opyned so false and wronge
Whiche beleued not in the natyuite
Of Iesu chryst and the vyrgyn Mary

And yet that he dyd suffre passyon
Bothe for them and all mankynde
Nothet yet of his resurreccyon
In they beleue they are so blinde
yet in bokes wyrtten as we fynde
That they haue ben taught many a tyme
For to forsake theyr owne false cryme

Than went we downe to a deper bale
Where chrysten soules dyde wepe and crye
In great sorowe peyne and bale
Brennyng in fyre most hote and drye
And some in Ice ryght depe dyd lye
For to expresse it it is in impossyble
The peynes there they are so horryble

The chrysten men dyd knowe goddes lawe
And euerp day had informacyon
fro deuyls the woikes them to withdraue
That they shoulde not fall in dampnacyon
yet wyl they not make sequestracyon
Commaunded by god but synne deedly
And here be they dampned saue onely his mercy

And thou haddest sette thy delectacyon
In fleshy pleasure and vayne glory
Thou haddest ben here without saluacyon
Without thou of god had asked mercy
Who that it asketh shall haue it truly
yf he be contryte and do repente

That he his lyfe in yll hath spent
This place sythens it is moost heuy
Noȝt derke and moost ferre fro lyghtnes
As phylosophers afferme by astronomy
Is in the myddes of the erth doules
That is a place of dyssolate derkenes
Wherefore by reason it must nedes be set
In y^e myddes of the erthe bothe longe & grete

Capitulum. xiiij.

My good aungell by his grete vertue
Shewed me all this in a shorte space
And after hym I dyde than pursue
With my wyfe vnto the saye place
That we cam fro full of all solace
Where was my fader in the company
Of many sayntes that dyde there tary

My wyfe and me than for to bynge
To the place of eternall gloze
With heuently tunes sweetely syngynge
That them to here it was grete melody
More than ony tonge can speyfe
This was theyr songe so swete and gloriouse
That they dyd synge with voyce so vertuous

O celestyall kyng one two and thre
All people prayse the god and lord
Whiche arte in heuen o noble trynyte
Whose roiall power and myserycorde
Confirmed is by thyne hye accorde
On vs with trowth for to endure
Withhouten ende as we are sure

Gloze be to the fader almyghty
And to the sonne & to the holy goost

Thre persones and one god truly
Whose power neuer can be lost
For he is the lord of myghtes most
And so hath ben without begynnynge
And euer shalbe without endynge

Whan we were in the ayer of asure
There dyd vs mete the noble ierarchy
As Cherubyn and seraphyn so pure
With other angels in theyr company
That dyd proclame and souge on hys
With voyce insacpable most melodys
To god aboue sanctus sanctus sanctus

There dyd I see the planettes seuen
Howe in ordre by alteracyon
To merueylous for me to neuyn
For they sealed not theyr operacyon
Some assended some made declynacyon
Entrynge theyr howses of the .xiiij. sygnes
Some indyrectly and some by dyrecte lynes

To heuen we stped a place moost glourous
Where as we dyd beholde the deite
With insacpable countenaunce most desyrous
And truly than the more that we
Dyd loke vpon his souerayne beaute
The more our desyre dyd encrease
This is a ioye that shall not cease

This is a regyon moost full of sweteness
This is a realme of delectacyon
This is a lande of infynyte gladnes
Without ony stormy trybulacyon
This place is of eterne saluacyon

Where as angels and sayntes for theyr solace
Euermore to loke on goddes face

Why shulde I wyte thynges of dyuynyte
Or endyte of suche maters hye
Sythen it longeth nothyng to my faculte
Therfore of it I wyll not lenger tary
For fere that I in it shulde bary
And bycaue that truthe shall be my mede
I wyll now leue and turne vnto my crede

So vertue and clenness by good ryght
Truly in marriage ioyned must be
For they loue togyder with all theyr myght
Without dyscencyon or duplycyte
And they bothe are alwaye in bnyte
To whome heuen by tale generall
Entayled is by a dede memoypall

Now are they togyder to heuen gone
There for to dwell in ioye eternall
Where that there is the heuenly trone
Of our sauour Jesu dere and specyall
Who that hym loueth truly ouer all
Ledynge his lyfe with vertu and clenness
Shall come vnto the glozy endeles

But in the synyschyng of my mater
To god the maker of all thyng
Deuoutly now I make my prayer
To saue kynge Henry our ryghtfull kynge
From all treason and dolefull mournynge
And for to maynteyne the great honoure
Of this swete reed rose so fayre of colour
This floure was kepte ryght longe in close

Amonge the leues holsome and sote
And regally sprange and arose
Out of the noble stocke and rote
Of the reed rose tree to be our bote
After our bale sende by great grace
On vs to reygne by ryght longe space

O lord god what ioye was this
Unto his mother so good and gracious
Whan that she sawe her sone p'wys
Of his enemyes to be so victor'ous
It caused her to be most ioyous
And yet therof no wonder why
For he was ryght longe from her truly

A ioyfull metynge than was byt'wene
The mother and the sone so dere
A daye of gladnes bryght and shene
Fressher than phebus myddaye spere
Whan her sone to vs dyd appere
He dyd vs lyght with his pure beames
Quenchynge of Mars the fyry lemes

O heuently kyng o eternall emperoure
O thre persones and one god equall
I pray the to kepe fro all doloure
This mother with her sone in speccall
With all theyr noble buddes in generall
And laude be to the that dyd enhance
Hym to his ryght and propre herytaunce

The whyte rose that with tempestes troublous
Qualed was and eke blowne asyde
The reed rose fortifyed and made delycious
It pleased god so for hym to prouyde

That his redolent budbes shall not syde
But euer encrease and be bytous
Of fatall byres whiche be contrayous

Thus god by grace dyd well combyne
The reed rose and the whyte in maryage
Beyng bnyed charytably dyd shyne
In all clennes and vertuons courage
Of whose ryght and royall lygnage
Pryncce Henry is spronge our kynge to be
After his father by ryght good cquyte

O bytous Henry our secunde treasure
Surmountynge in vertue and myght of beaute
O gemme of gentylnes and lanterne of pleasure
O rubycunde blossome and sterre of humylte
O famous fructe full of benygnyte
I praye to god he do well encrease
Your byghe state in rest and pease

O thoughtfull herte for lacke of conynge
Now layde to slepe this longe wynters nyght
Kysse by agayne loke on the shynynge
Of fayre lucina clere and byght
Beholde eke Mercury with his fayre lyght
Castynge to the lowest his streames that be mery
Unto the consolacyon of thyne emyspery

O good Golder fountayne most aromatike
I the now lacke for to depure
By rudenes with thy lusty rethorike
And also I mys as I am sure
By mayster Chaucer to take the cure
Of my penne for he was experte
In eloquent termes subtyll and couerte
Where is now Lydgate the flour in sentence

That shulde my mynde forge to endyte
After the termes of famous eloquence
And strengthe my penna well for to wyte
With maters freshe of pure delyte
They can not helpe me there is no remedy
But for to pray to god almyghty

For to dystyll the dewe of influence
Upon my brayne so dull and rude
And to enlumyne me with his sapience
That I my rudenes may exclude
And in my mater well to conclude
Unto thy pleasure and to the reders all
To whome I excuse me now in generall

ExPLICIT EXEMPLUM VIRTUTIS.

There endeth the exemple of vertue Imprinted at
London in flete strete at the sygne of the
sonne by me Wynkyn de Worde.
Anno dni. M. cccc. xxx.



